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SUBJECT: Asia Clean Energy Forum 2009 Draws More Than 800 Experts to  
Share Successful Strategies for Scaling Up Clean Energy Investments  
in Asia

REF: BANGKOK 001678

11. SUMMARY: To help confront the urgent challenge of scaling up  
clean energy solutions for Asia while mitigating climate change, the  
US Agency for International Development's Regional Development  
Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA) partnered with the Asian Development  
Bank (ADB) and other donors to organize the 2009 Asia Clean Energy  
Forum (ACEF) during June 17-19 during Climate and Clean Energy Week  
at ADB headquarters in Manila. The event was attended by more than  
800 key energy experts, developers, policy makers, and financiers  
who shared their experiences designing and implementing clean energy  
initiatives that, if significantly scaled up, will address climate  
change and strengthen the long-term energy security of Asian  
nations. USAID and ADB are now initiating planning for ACEF 2010 and  
associated events. END SUMMARY

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Climate and Clean Energy Week  
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12. USAID/RDMA co-organized a series of events during Climate and  
Clean Energy Week through its Environmental Cooperation-Asia Clean  
Development and Climate Program (ECO-Asia CDCP), in partnership with  
the Asian Development Bank. Supporting sponsors included the  
Governments of Australia, Japan, Norway, Spain, and Sweden. This was  
the fourth year of the event, and the third consecutive year that it  
was co-sponsored by USAID/RDMA.

¶3. Climate and Clean Energy Week included two main meetings. In cooperation with The Energy Research Institute (TERI), ADB organized a High-Level Dialogue on Climate Change in Asia and the Pacific during June 16-17, 2009. Following the Dialogue, USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia co-organized the Asia Clean Energy Forum during June 17-19, 2009.

¶4. The High-Level Dialogue featured a wide range of prominent climate change experts and officials. The urgency of action on climate change was highlighted by the host of the event, Nobel Prize Winner Dr. R.K. Pachauri, who said that the world had only six years left to limit greenhouse gas emissions in order to avoid a tipping point that would increase global temperatures by more than 2 degrees Celsius.

¶5. Philippines President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo delivered a speech at a special closing session of the High-Level Dialogue that was attended by both participants of the Dialogue and the Asia Clean Energy Forum. President Arroyo urged Asian countries to embrace renewable energy as a means of helping to avert catastrophic climate change. Climate change must not be forgotten in the efforts to end the global economic downturn, she said.

¶6. During the week, USAID/RDMA Acting Director Krell met with ADB Acting US Executive Director Paul Curry at ADB to brief him on the week's events and their relevance to addressing clean energy challenges in Asia. Curry positively noted the USAID-ADB collaboration on the event and was pleased to hear USAID plans to continue to support the Forum next year.

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Asia Clean Energy Forum  
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¶7. Following the conclusion of the High-Level Dialogue, a total of 821 energy experts, policy makers, financiers, and project developers from 47 countries participated in the Asia Clean Energy Forum 2009 (the Forum) during June 17-19, 2009. As a testament to the rapidly growing interest in clean energy and climate issues, this year's Forum had double the number participants reached in 2007, the first year that USAID co-organize the Forum with ADB.

¶8. Featuring a total of 100 expert speakers and 25 sessions, this year's Forum focused on initiatives that will address climate change and strengthen the long-term energy security of Asian nations while helping Asian businesses weather the global economic downturn. The discussions focused on four thematic areas: energy efficiency and renewable energy, urban and transport issues, access to energy for the poor, and energy and global climate change.

¶9. Speakers at the Forum stressed that Asia would need to play a major role in reducing emissions and in the transition to a clean energy economy. Energy demand in Asia is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 2.4 percent to 2030, compared to 1.1 percent for the rest of the world. While private investment in clean energy technologies in Asia has stayed stable during the global slowdown, new opportunities have been emerging as a result of government stimulus packages. The "green" portion of the stimulus packages for the world's major economies, including China, total more than US\$430 billion. Most of this investment will go for clean energy, green buildings, and sustainable transport.

¶10. United States Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney delivered a keynote address during the opening plenary emphasizing shared responsibility and cooperation. "The United States, just like every other nation on this planet, does not have the capacity to address climate change by itself," she said. "There is no go-it-alone option for addressing climate change. That's why we must work together. We must share solutions. There is, to be blunt, no other viable option."

¶11. One of the main themes of the Forum was expanding access to energy for the hundreds of millions of people in Asia who lack modern energy services. Also during the opening plenary, ADB launched its "Energy for All" partnership which aims to provide access to reliable and affordable energy services to 100 million people in Asia and the Pacific by 2015.

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USAID Activities Highlighted at the Forum  
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¶12. USAID's ECO-Asia CDCP organized several key events during Climate and Clean Energy Week, including the following.

¶13. USAID/RDMA launched a landmark report, Biofuels in Asia: An Analysis of Sustainability Options, which found that by promoting small-scale production of biofuels in rural communities rather than large-scale production for transport uses, governments and donors could help bring modern energy to as many as half a billion people in rural Asia. (See REFTEL BANGKOK 001678 for more details.)

¶14. The Asia Clean Energy Marketplace Competition, organized by ECO-Asia CDCP allowed companies, entrepreneurs, or institutions from across Asia to showcase their technologies, products, or projects in a poster competition. Thirteen companies or organizations were selected as finalists and presented their posters during this session to participants and an international panel of judges. USAID/RDMA Acting Mission Director Barbara Krell presented awards during the closing plenary of the Forum.

¶15. USAID's ECO-Asia program convened a pre-Forum workshop with more than 70 leading experts and government and utility officials on ways to scale up efficiency improvements through renovation and modernization (R&M) of coal-fired power plants in Asia. The thermal efficiency of Asia's existing coal-fired power plants is significantly lower than the global average, resulting in relatively high greenhouse gas and other emissions per unit of energy generated. Participants identified priorities for overcoming technical, regulatory, and financial barriers to scaling up R&M, and shared experience and lessons learned from ongoing projects, including USAID-supported efforts in China, India, and Vietnam.

¶16. During a Clean Energy Project Showcase session, selected clean energy entrepreneurs presented their business plans to a mock panel of investors and to seek feedback for improving their proposals. The projects presented were for two-wheeled electric vehicles in India, a patented technology for specialty biodiesel from biomass in Southeast Asia, and integrated biomass-to-electricity project in Thailand.

¶17. The Closing Plenary offered a vision for a clean energy future, with keynote remarks by Antonio Hill of Oxfam International, and Piyasvasti Amranand, former Minister of Energy for Thailand. Barbara Krell, USAID/RDMA Acting Mission Director, and Bindu Lohani, ADB Vice President of Finance and Administration, delivered closing remarks. Acting Mission Director Krell also presented awards to the three winners of Asia Clean Energy Marketplace Awards for Best Innovative Clean Energy Technology, Best Innovative Clean Energy Project or Business Model, and Best Innovative Clean Energy Program.

¶18. Full presentations from the Forum are available online at <http://www.cleanenergyasia.net>, and more information about the USAID/RDMA ECO-Asia Clean Development and Climate Program can be found at <http://usaid.eco-asia.org/programs/cdc>.

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Planning for ACEF 2010  
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¶19. Next year, the Asia Clean Energy Forum will be held at ADB in June or July 2010. USAID/RDMA plans to solicit suggestions from US agencies for speakers and participants, and in particular for high-level speakers from the US government. It is envisioned that next year's Forum will be designed to respond to actionable outcomes following the climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009. USAID/RDMA and ADB will also work to offset carbon emissions to make next year's Forum a "zero-carbon-footprint" event.

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